



Some background and thoughts on forming this Collection from the Collector

I must have been born a collector, growing up in Inglethorpe Avenue, Kensington, the youngest of three children to school teacher parents from northern New South Wales. It has been said I was a 'gin' baby as I arrived on 8th August 1946, born out of celebration at the end of World War II.

My early memories go back to my father announcing the death of King George VI in 1952 and saying 'Long Live the Queen'. By the time of the Royal Visit in 1954 I was collecting the new British Commonwealth stamps, with a neighbour, Miss Gourlay, coaching myself and other children in the neighbourhood to properly collect and arrange our stamp albums.

In the late 1950s, a bowl of old coins in the kitchen cupboard sparked my interest in numismatics. There were 1937 crowns and 1927 Canberra florins among others, including the curious 'In Memory of the Good Old Days', 1788 imitation guinea.

On occasional trips to town the Bathurst Street shop of Stanley Lipscombe offered the opportunity to buy interesting coins, as did the Royal Arcade shop of Martin Daniel. In early 1960 Mr Lipscombe introduced me to the Australian Numismatic Society. I became a member in May 1960. My numismatic journey had truly begun. It led to a career through school and a Bachelor of Economics degree from Sydney University to taking a role as Managing Director for Spink & Son Limited of London, in their first Australian office in Sydney in 1976, to Editor of the Australian Numismatic Society's Report, later President of the Society in the important bicentenary year of 1988 and President of the Numismatic Association of Australia a few years later. In the meantime I maintained membership and Fellowships of the British Numismatic Society, the Royal Numismatic Society, both of London, the American Numismatic Society of New York and the Societies in Adelaide, Melbourne and Wellington. I became an official valuer of the Commonwealth Government and have valued and advised on the collections of museums and institutions, including the State Library of New South Wales, the Powerhouse Museum, the National Coin Collection at the Royal Australian Mint in Canberra and the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

From 1960, when 13 years old, I had been collecting Australian and New Zealand tokens and medalets. I was part of a group of interested collectors collaborating with Gilbert Heyde in the writing of his new work on the Unofficial Coins of Australia and New Zealand in 1965-67. The year 1966 saw an important exhibition being arranged by the Australian

Numismatic Society at Sydney Town Hall to commemorate the introduction of decimal currency. It was at this time I met the father of New Zealand numismatics, Allan Sutherland, who wrote the Numismatic History of New Zealand published in Wellington in 1941. Allan was a great mentor to young collectors and spent an afternoon at our Kensington home discussing our numismatic interests. I had been in correspondence with him prior to this as well as other collectors.

My interest in collecting New Zealand medals, medalets and check pieces was greatly enhanced after my first trip to New Zealand in 1971. I had the experience of meeting fellow collectors in Perth for several months in 1969-70. In New Zealand in the early 1970s I visited many collectors and made significant acquisitions from them and their families. In particular Leon Morel, Ern Dale, Mervyn Lynch, R.G. (Dickie) Bell, Bert Williams (a partner in John Bertrand) whose medals included several Teutenberg items and a Lloyd's Medal for the capture of Count Von Luckner in Fiji during World War I.

Once I joined Spink & Son in 1975 and opened the Australian branch in Sydney in April 1976, I had to cull much of the collection but was allowed to continue with British tokens and New Zealand medalets as these would not present a conflict of interest. Over the years I continued to acquire further New Zealand material for the collection. Collectors and dealers in New Zealand virtually gave me first refusal on anything of interest that came their way. In the case of gold fob medals and awards, and Fire Brigade service medals it was apparent that no end was in sight as to what could be acquired.

In recent years the realisation was that in order to know just what was in the collection a serious catalogue had to be prepared. I did not have the time to undertake the task and continue to manage the now expanded business as I miraculously did in 1997-8 for my British token collection sold in Noble Numismatics Sale 58B, followed by Sales 61B and 64B (1998-2000). I have been fortunate to find in Tony Grant, someone of a kindred spirit and with a lot of cajoling I was able to convince him to devote two or three years out of his life to the task. The result has been, for the first part, a work of the highest standard. I would also like to thank John O'Connor for his additional research on some items and for his fine editorial work.

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